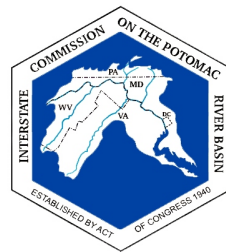


INTERSTATE COMMISSION ON THE POTOMAC RIVER BASIN

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Potomac Basin News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE, September 9, 2004

Potomac Drinking Water Source Protection Partnership Established

Utilities, Government Agencies Together Ensure Protection of Public Drinking Water Sources

Water utilities and the various governmental agencies responsible for drinking water protection in the Potomac River basin have forged a unique multi-state partnership to ensure that the public drinking water sources serving over 4 million people are protected from contamination that may have adverse health effects on consumers.

A special kick-off event to officially establish the partnership is being held on Friday, September 24, at Little Seneca Reservoir in Black Hill Regional Park near Germantown, Md. A formal resolution signing ceremony by the 16 charter partnership members, along with displays by watershed groups, water-related artwork by school children, and a native seed collection, are among the day's events. Activities will begin at 9:30 a.m. with the formal signing ceremony to commence at 11:30 a.m.

Both water suppliers and agencies involved with drinking water source protection share a common interest in protecting the drinking water resources of the Potomac River basin. By partnering together, the two groups will provide a drinking water perspective to enhance the effectiveness of existing and future watershed protection efforts and provide a coordinated approach to drinking water source protection. To implement this vision, the groups have formed the Potomac River Basin Drinking Water Source Protection Partnership.

The partnership will assist water systems and communities with drinking water source protection by developing a basin-wide protection strategy, identifying regional priorities, coordinating efforts, and providing a vehicle for information sharing and dialogue.

Partnership water suppliers include those from the metropolitan Washington, D.C., area and other water utilities. They are joined in the partnership with the state agencies responsible for drinking water protection from Maryland, Virginia, West Virginia and Pennsylvania; the District of Columbia; the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, and the Interstate Commission on the Potomac River Basin, which serves as partnership coordinator. The partnership will eventually expand to include water suppliers in other parts of the basin, along with other government agencies that have a role in source water protection in the basin.

(*)--Executive Committee
(a)--Alternate

“The formation of the partnership is a testament to the commitment of its members to safeguarding public water supplies,” noted Joseph Hoffman, executive director of the Interstate Commission on the Potomac River Basin. “Drinking water source protection can move forward more effectively with the basin-wide coordination and cooperation that is established by this partnership.”

This initiative is especially timely as states are completing federally mandated source water assessments of all public water systems. The assessments identify the contributing area to a drinking water source and determine the susceptibility of the source to potential and existing sources of contamination, including sediment and pathogens. The assessment then provides the basic framework for developing a voluntary local source water protection program. Source water protection efforts not only protect public health and safety, but also promote sound land-use planning and prevent costly drinking water contamination.

For more information, contact the Interstate Commission on the Potomac River Basin or your state agency responsible for drinking water protection.

Charter members of the DWSP Partnership:

City of Hagerstown, Maryland

City of Rockville, Maryland

Fairfax Water

Interstate Commission on the Potomac River Basin

Maryland Department of the Environment

Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection

Town of Leesburg, Virginia

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region III

Virginia Department of Environmental Quality

Virginia Department of Health

Washington Aqueduct Division of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

Washington County, Maryland

Washington, D.C. Department of Health

Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission

West Virginia Department of Environmental Protection

West Virginia Department of Health and Human Resources

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The ICPRB is an interstate compact commission established by Congress in 1940. Its mission is the enhancement, protection, and conservation of the water resources of the Potomac River and its tributaries through regional and interstate cooperation. Represented by appointed commissioners, the ICPRB includes the District of Columbia, Maryland, Pennsylvania, Virginia, West Virginia, and the federal government.